



# Ten Steps to Success for Small Businesses

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# Step 1: Identify Your Product or Service

- Determine the specific classification code(s) the Government uses under solicitations
  - for the types of products and services your firm is capable of providing
    - ✓ **Federal Supply Classification (FSC) Codes** -  
[www.acquisition.gov/service\\_product\\_codes.pdf](http://www.acquisition.gov/service_product_codes.pdf)
    - ✓ **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Codes**
      - [www.census.gov/naics](http://www.census.gov/naics)
  - After pinpointing the FSC and NAICS codes that correspond to your business line,
    - enter them when registering as a Federal vendor (see **Step 2**) and when conducting
      - online searches for available Government contracting opportunities (see **Step 3**)
  - Size Standards and NAICS Codes
    - Every solicitation issued by the Federal Government is assigned a NAICS code by the Procuring Contracting Officer responsible for releasing the solicitation

# Step 2: Register Your Company

- Does your firm qualify as a small business?
  - For Federal size regulations refer to [13 C.F.R. Part 121](#)
  - For Federal rules regarding affiliation refer to [13 C.F.R. Part 121.103](#)
- Does your firm fall under one or more socioeconomic subcategories?
  - SMALL DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS
  - “8(a)” BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ENROLLEE (requires SBA certification)
  - WOMAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS
  - HUBZone SMALL BUSINESS (requires SBA certification)
  - VETERAN-OWNED and SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS

Visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) for explanations and supplemental materials on each subcategory

- Websites for Government Contractor Registration
  - ✓ **Central Contractor Registry (CCR)** - [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov)
  - ✓ **Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA)** - [orca.bpn.gov](http://orca.bpn.gov)

# Step 3: Locate Contracting Opportunities

- Contracting Opportunity Websites

- ✓ **Federal Business Opportunities** , or “FedBizOpps” - [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)

- All Solicitations Valued Over \$25,000
  - Award Notices
  - Sources-Sought Notices
  - Special Notices, (e.g., regarding Industry Days applicable to a specific acquisition)
  - Small Business Central Events Listing

- ✓ TACOM LCMC Procurement Network (ProcNet) -  
[contracting.tacom.army.mil](http://contracting.tacom.army.mil)

- Common criteria used in online searches and queries for opportunities include...

- FSC or NAICS code
  - Solicitation type (e.g., set-aside for small businesses)
  - Procurement agency (e.g., US Army TACOM LCMC)
  - Product or service keyword (use Government terminology, and experiment to isolate)

# Step 4: Zero-In on Target Markets

- From [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov) and other contracting opportunity websites (**Step 3**), identify the Federal procurement agencies that buy a lot of what you sell
- Make regular use of each targeted agency's procurement website, for example the

TACOM LCMC "ProcNet" whose unique features are highlighted below

**US Army TACOM LCMC ProcNet**, [contracting.tacom.army.mil](http://contracting.tacom.army.mil), Comprehensive "doing business" tip

- Open solicitations
  - Information on major buys (e.g., Industry Day notices)
  - Awarded contracts
  - Acquisition forecasts
  - Market survey notices
  - Qualified supplier guidance
- Small Business Section sheets on wide-ranging topics for small businesses
  - Lists of prime contractors (manufacturers, service/IT providers, construction firms)
  - Registration tool for available subcontractors

- For agency-specific information ~~such as assistance~~ contact a Small Business Specialist
  - Conference and event announcements
- within the agency's Office of Small Business Programs
  - Federal OSBP List - <http://www.osdbu.gov/offices.html>
  - Army SB Specialist Search Tool

# Step 5: Investigate Special Programs

## Websites for Federal Programs

- General Services Administration (GSA) Schedules Program -  
[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)
- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program - [www.sbir.gov](http://www.sbir.gov)

## Websites for Defense Department and Army Programs

- DoD Email Program - [www.dscc.dla.mil/programs/email](http://www.dscc.dla.mil/programs/email)
- Mentor-Protégé Program - [www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/mentor\\_protege](http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/mentor_protege)
- Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions (CHESS) Program  
-  
<https://chess.army.mil/>
- Soldier Product Improvement (SPI) Program -  
<https://peosoldier.army.mil/newpeo/feedback/spi.asp>

## Websites for TACOM LCMC Programs

- Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages (DMSMS) Program -  
[www.dmsms-tardec-army.com](http://www.dmsms-tardec-army.com)
- Manufacturing Technical Assistance Production Program (MTAPP) -  
<http://armymtapp.us/>
- Ground Vehicle Gateway for Innovations -

# Step 6: Pursue Subcontracting Opportunities

- Subcontracting Opportunity Websites

- ✓ SBA Sub-Net - [www.sba.gov/subnet](http://www.sba.gov/subnet)
- ✓ DoD Subcontracting Directory - [www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing\\_business/](http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business/)
- ✓ DoD Prime Contract Descriptions - [www.defense.gov/contracts](http://www.defense.gov/contracts)
- ✓ TACOM LCMC Prime Contractor Lists -  
<http://contracting.tacom.army.mil/sbo/sbo.htm>

- After targeting a prime contractor make maximum use of its supplier website, for

instance that of the Oshkosh Corp Systems

whose respective key features are

## Oshkosh Corporate Purchasing

[www.oskgpsc.net](http://www.oskgpsc.net)

- Supplier development information
- Purchasing POCs by commodity
- Online supplier registration
- Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO) contact information

## GdLS Supply Chain Management

[www.gdls.com/suppliersoverview](http://www.gdls.com/suppliersoverview)

- Supplier manual
- “iSupplier” instructions for online quoting
- Online supplier registration
- Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO) contact Information

# Step 7: Learn the Rules of Gov't Contracting

- Be aware of what sets Government contracting apart from commercial contracting
  - Regulation and policy dictate all of the Government's contracting procedures
  - Exceptions to competition are strictly controlled in Government contracting
  - Competitive Government solicitations must be publicized nationally
  - Any semblance of favoritism in Government - industry interactions is strictly forbidden
  - The Government buys products, not processes or the potential to produce
  - Before awarding a contract to an offeror the Government will assesses its performance history and delivery capability
- Regulatory and Policy Websites
  - Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) - [www.acquisition.gov/far](http://www.acquisition.gov/far)
  - Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (DPAP) - [www.acq.osd.mil/dpap](http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap)
- Other Web Resources

# Step 8: Know the Players in Gov't Contracting

- Standard Participants in the Procurement Process

- PROCURING CONTRACTING OFFICER (PCO) ...releases solicitations and awards contracts
- PROGRAM MANAGER ...develops acquisition plans and oversees acquisition programs
- SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST ...screens all upcoming solicitations as set-aside candidates
- SBA PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVE ...also reviews solicitations for set-aside
  - suitability, and can challenge PCO procurement strategy decisions
- COMPETITION ADVOCATE ...promotes competition and challenges barriers to it
- ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTING OFFICER (ACO) ...monitors contractual performance
  - Act on your direct behalf, in a manner

- Your initial go-to person for contracting advice and guidance at any Federal procurement agency is the Small Business Specialist

## **What SB Specialists can do for you**

- ✓ Discuss the extent that your capabilities are the province of the buyer  
match the agency's opportunities and PCO)

## **What SB Specialists cannot do**

- Respond to questions regarding solicitations or contracts (such matters)

# Step 9: Seek Advice, Assistance and Insights

## General Assistance and Information Websites

- Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) - [www.aptac-us.org](http://www.aptac-us.org)
- Association of Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) - [www.asbdc-us.org](http://www.asbdc-us.org)
- Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) - [www.score.org](http://www.score.org)
- SBA Financial Assistance Program - [www.sba.gov/financialassistance](http://www.sba.gov/financialassistance)
- Federal Business Gateway - [www.business.gov](http://www.business.gov)
- Senate Small Business Committee - [sbc.senate.gov](http://sbc.senate.gov)
- House Small Business Committee - [www.house.gov/smbiz/](http://www.house.gov/smbiz/)

## Non-Government Organization Websites

- National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) - [www.ndia.org](http://www.ndia.org)
- Institute for Defense and Government Advancement (IDGA) - [www.idga.org](http://www.idga.org)
- Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) - [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org)
- SAE International - [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org)
- National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining (NCDMM) - [www.ncdmm.org](http://www.ncdmm.org)

# Step 10: Market Your Firm

- Develop handouts, starting with a “company resume” of one to two pages, that are customized to your targeted Government market(s)
  - Make clear what your firm’s size and socioeconomic status is
  - Focus on **product over process**; define the specific items or services your company can provide, and identify applicable FSC and NAICS codes
  - Cite the GSA schedule(s) your firm is an approved source under
  - List your current major customers, and describe any notable business successes and accomplishments
- Be proactive...respond to market survey notices, register as a supplier wherever possible, attend Industry Days, and take full advantage of your local PTAC and other resources to enhance your competitiveness (see **Steps 4-6** and **Step 9**)
- Attend conferences and other forums to engage in face-to-face marketing